



LITIGATION COUNSEL

Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Practice Group/Voting Unit

Location: Remote (Within California), Sacramento, Oakland, Los Angeles, or San Diego

Individuals who are Deaf or Disabled are encouraged to apply.

SALARY RANGE (Depending on Experience): \$113,144 - \$165,704 annually.

We base salary and position offers on experience and an internal equity analysis.

EXCELLENT BENEFITS including 8% 401k Match

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Open until filled.

WHO WE ARE

Disability Rights California (DRC) is the Protection & Advocacy system for the State of California. DRC is a nonprofit agency with a mandate under federal and state law to defend, advance, and strengthen the rights of people with disabilities. DRC works to create a world where all people with disabilities are empowered and are treated with dignity and respect by being included in their communities, afforded the same opportunities as people without disabilities, and fully recognized to make their own decisions. To effectively advocate for people with disabilities, we address systemic discrimination in every form, and acknowledge the unique challenges faced by people who experience the intersection of multiple types of discrimination. We are the largest protection and advocacy agency in the country.

INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PRACTICE GROUP

We are a statewide team who engage in multi-pronged advocacy, including impact litigation and individual cases, administrative and legislative policy, collective action campaigns, and other systemic reform efforts, to improve the lives of intellectually and developmentally disabled Californians. We embrace movement lawyering principles and prioritize strategies that center on and build

the power of disabled people and their families. Our current Practice Group priorities include:

- Dismantling the structural ableism, racism, and systemic inequities experienced by people who receive services from California's I/DD service delivery system.
- Advancing the core principles of the *Olmstead* decision and the rights of intellectually and developmentally disabled people to live, work, and play in their communities.
- Expanding access to Supported Decision Making, Self-Determination, and other supports that advance the autonomy, preferences, and choices of intellectually and developmentally disabled people.
- Building relationships with and developing advocacy strategies alongside organizations led by intellectually and developmentally disabled people and their families.

-

VOTING RIGHTS PRACTICE GROUP

DRC's Voting Rights Practice Group advocates to ensure voting is fully accessible for people with disabilities by educating government agencies about best practices and educating voters about their rights, including options that allow them to vote privately and independently. The Voting Rights Practice Group provides voting rights and civic participation trainings, advocates with government agencies to improve the voter registration process for people with disabilities, collaborates with election officials to improve accessibility of the voting process, runs a voting hotline and assists voters with election related complaints, tests accessible voting equipment, creates helpful publications for voters with disabilities and election officials, trains poll workers on making voting accessible, and participates on disability-focused committees in numerous counties. The Voting Rights Practice Group litigates a limited number of voting rights cases.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

Litigation Counsel plays a significant role in shaping our litigation and advocacy vision, including working with the team to develop legal, policy, and other systems change advocacy initiatives to improve the lives of intellectually and developmentally disabled Californians. The Litigation Counsel also helps to ensure the excellence of the Practice Group's legal work by providing leadership, mentorship, and supervision to Practice Group attorneys on all advocacy efforts, including state and federal court litigation. The ideal candidate will have an unwavering commitment to excellence, a deep understanding of the intersectional issues faced by our clients, and a

commitment to using the law to develop creative strategies toward movement-building goals.

Structurally, the Litigation Counsel reports to the Managing Attorney of the I/DD Practice Group, who provides leadership, strategic direction, and overall management of the team, including through overseeing supervisory and administrative tasks. In practice, the Litigation Counsel and Managing Attorney lead our team together. The Litigation Counsel position will also support and oversee the Voting Rights Practice Group's limited litigation practice.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Essential functions are the job responsibilities an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation. Litigation Counsel essential functions include:

- Develop legal, policy, and other systems change advocacy initiatives to address the needs of intellectually and developmentally disabled Californians and their families;
- Lead teams in litigation or major policy advocacy which may include targeted representation, complex litigation and/or appeals, or major policy advocacy at the state level;
- Mentor and train attorneys in the practice group in litigation and policy advocacy work;
- Support and oversee voting rights litigation;
- Monitor, summarize, and analyze case law, legislation, and administrative policy and practices for staff and other organizations.
- Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to address new or recurring problems that faced by our clients;
- Develop and sustain relationships with organizations led by intellectually and developmentally disabled people and key stakeholders within the I/DD community.
- Participate as a member of the DRC legal management team to assist in the development and advancement of the Legal Advocacy Unit's strategic direction;
- Identify and develop substantive and skills-based training for staff;
- Collaborate with other Litigation Counsel to fulfill various administrative and litigation-related responsibilities; and
- Co-review and approve the team's requests to commence new litigation.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Litigation Counsel provide leadership, training, and mentoring to Practice Group staff on litigation and advocacy. They also may provide direct supervision to staff members on cases and projects that they are leading and carry out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the DRC's policies and applicable laws.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates must have a Juris Doctor degree plus 9 years of experience practicing law. Internal candidates, if employed at DRC for four continuous years and with eight years of experience practicing law, may also apply.

Additional minimum qualifications include:

- Demonstrated ability to lead complex advocacy projects, build strong relationships, and work well in collaboration with others.
- Demonstrated commitment – through lived experience and/or employment history – to working with people with disabilities, people of color and low-income clients, and incorporating race-equity and community lawyering principles into their work.
- Expertise in one or more substantive areas of law related to the practice group's priorities;
- Expertise in federal and state civil litigation, including class action and/or mandamus writs and appellate practice, and systemic policy advocacy;
- 5 years of exemplary results in litigation;
- 3 years of successfully leading, training, mentoring, and developing attorneys and advocates;
- Excellent research, writing, analytic, and oral advocacy skills;
- Demonstrated results from mentorship, leadership, and supervision of multiple attorneys or advocates;
- Demonstrated ability to support and develop multiple junior staff in *their* own advocacy efforts, including litigation, systemic policy advocacy, administrative proceedings, and/or writs.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate effectively with other lawyers and support staff.
- The ability to work independently with appropriate supervision.

LICENSES / CERTIFICATES

Must be a member of the California State Bar, or eligible to practice under the Registered Legal Services Attorney Program.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Knowledge of state and federal civil procedure and the laws, rights, and service delivery systems as they apply to intellectually and developmentally disabled Californians.
- Knowledge of election laws and current voting-related issues.
- Able to communicate fluently and write effectively in Spanish or other language; or able to communicate using American Sign Language.
- Familiarity with both state and federal civil procedure;
- Experience in the disability rights movement;
- Extensive contacts in the disability community, especially the I/DD community;
- Experience developing impact strategies through community or movement-based lawyering;
- Experience with and/or extensive contacts in ethnic or language distinct communities;
- Familiarity and/or extensive contact with one or more of the following areas of law: homelessness, institutionalization, criminal justice, substance abuse, underserved or disadvantaged socioeconomic groups, or Gay/Lesbian/Bi-Sexual/Transgender/Intersex (LGBTI) communities;
- Deep commitment to zealous client-centered advocacy.
- Lived experience as a person with a disability.
- Family member of a person with a disability.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

Ability to travel (when it is safe to do so) occasionally for activities such as out-of-town meetings, trainings, and client representation activities up to 25% of the time.

Working at DRC is more than just a job - it is a rare opportunity to do what you are good at while making a difference! DRC offers competitive salaries and a generous benefit package. To view the detailed job description and complete the application process [here](#).